

Escape by Gazyrlezon

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Summary:

Running through the door, her whole body shaking, #011 got ... *wet*. Not bathtub-wet, but ... different. The *air* was wet, and now #011 was, too. Everything was covered in little drops of water.

Cold, she thought.

But better cold than eaten. Better cold than ... there.

We first meet Eleven in the middle of a forest, and later learn a few scraps of information on how she escaped (and when), but we never learn what was going on in her head as she did so.

Escape

Running through the door, her whole body shaking, #011 got ... *wet*. Not bathtub-wet, but ... different. The *air* was wet, and now #011 was, too. Everything was covered in little drops of water.

Cold, she thought.

But better cold than eaten. Better cold than ... there.

Shuddering, she remembered.

(That room that room that room that room that room ...)

She remembered that room, and the screams *and the screams and the screams and the screams* and the blood, blood flowing from the men that were all friends and the cracks in the walls and the, and the, the ... that *thing*.

Now, even here where the air was full of droplets and so cold and strange and and ... and *alive*, the shouts of the men that were all friends, the shouts all around her and the threats and the voices and the voice of *him* her Papa, they all mixed with her thoughts and memories of the screams of that *thing*, of that thing *that can't hurt you*, and still she was crying.

Not all droplets running down her face and soaking her gown were from the air, and again that made her think of that room, *that room that room that room* and the darkness, the darkness and the silence that would wrap itself around her, and the face, the face of *him*, standing there looking at her while she screamed —

— *No*.

She would not think of that now; once before already there had been blood leaking from men that were friends on the floor and a crack in the wall and she hadn't done anything, hadn't *run* and then nothing had changed and she'd cried and cried until her Papa had come to wrap her into his arms just like the darkness in that room would have done otherwise ...

But not now.

Now, she was running, and if she got wet and sick and alone through all of it then that was ... that was not good, no, never would anything be *good* except when she did things, when she did these things that were so hard to do and then there'd be blood and ...

But running, she felt ... *better*. Easier, maybe. #011 lacked words, she knew that, she knew she'd never reach the level in speaking that her Papa had or the men that were friends. She'd thought she knew feelings, though, and yet right now she was feeling something she'd never felt before.

Shouts still rang around here, and #011 almost fell when slipping on something watery and wet and *slippery* and for a moment she thought she was back in that place, in that place with the webs and the death and the *thing*, but she wasn't, she realized, she *wasn't*, it was just some smeary brown stuff and it couldn't hurt her, so she tried to get up again but then there was an arm around her that pulled her up and a voice and, and she felt, she *felt* —

(wrongness and anger)

— it pulling close around her neck like it was going to put her back into that room (*that room that room that room and the darkness and silence wrapped around her there*) but then there was blood, and a sound like when the wall had broken, *cracking*, and more droplets joined the others all over her face and her gown, and she felt and knew what she had just done, and done *again*.

Screaming, #011 ran away again, and further into the unknown, through the wet air around her that made her so ... so *not-closed-in* —

(is there a word for it I hope there is I think there should be)

— and so different from ever before, and if she couldn't see much then the men who were friends couldn't see her, either, except for the one who now lay behind her in the brown slimy stuff that was now also all over her gown but she didn't care, she *ran* —

— and the shouts grew lower, and farther away as she did so.

Then the girl #011 found the gate. It was hard to see, with all the water in the air, but it was there, definitely, a round dark hole leading out and away from here, and she ... *hesitated*.

Here was a gate leading out of this world, out and out and out and away, but the girl #011 couldn't bring herself go crawl into it, thinking of the cracks in the walls and the gate and the bath *the bath the bath the bathtub* and the blackness and the *thing* that had come through that gate and oh that gate *that gate that gate that she'd opened* and the horrors that it had brought —

— No.

There was that gate and then there was this one, and the girl #011 couldn't know where this one lead, this one was *different*, she couldn't *feel* it go through space the way she'd been able to feel the other one (*the other one the other one the other one that she'd opened and oh the horrors it had brought when she'd done so*). And the men who were friends she could hear shouting in the distance and threats and lights and and somewhere there would be her Papa and behind them was the bath *the bath the bath that bathtub* and then crack in the wall and that *thing* ...

The girl #011 slipped into the gate and the long tunnel that lay behind it, crawling, crawling, *crawling* further even as the blackness had her thinking of that room that room *that room* and the silence wrapped around her with her Papa's face clear before her eyes in memory and, and —

She crawled further. And further.

And *further*.

And she cried. There was water and wetness enough in the tunnel already and none of the men that were or weren't friends and —

(*friends what does that word mean anyways why don't I know it it sounds important why does Papa use it so often?*)

— and then here no one would notice if she cried and no one would

come to put her into that room and into the blackness and silence, and of course she was already in blackness, but this was different because it *wasn't* silent here and she could still move, she could still crawl along the tunnel and deeper into the gate and hope that it would lead her somewhere, somewhere, *somewhere easier* than the corridors with the men who she'd been told where friends and her Papa and *that room*.

Still she took a moment to rest and to lay still and to cry because she hoped that now that she was so deep inside the gate and the tunnel the men who might be friends couldn't come after her because they were too big and wouldn't fit in the tunnel, and so she rested and cried and cried to herself and, and —

— *and then she was there, there, there and there was here, and she was here and in the darkness and there were webs everywhere and she could smell the smell of the thing again and again it rushed over her and she cried more and was afraid and afraid and afraid, and then something moved and she screamed but it wasn't that thing or one of the men who weren't friends though it looked a bit like them, it was a, a, a — something like a man but smaller, like her and he screamed, too, and she understood he was frightened and afraid same as her and she thought he should be, here in this place, and she looked at him and he looked back and she —*

— and she was back in the tunnel, and the other one wasn't, he was still *there*, still there in that place to which she'd opened the gate and where that *thing* had come from and now it might be there with him and she cried again now, and more, and lay sobbing inside the bottom of the tunnel thinking of herself and of the world she'd left behind and of the one ahead, and of the other one she'd seen who'd looked so much like her and she *remembered*, remembered the other face and the fear she'd understood that it felt and, and —

(is there a word to describe that figure because there should be but I don't know)

— and she *remembered*, and would not forget it, forget *him*, not ever.

And then time passed, and she cried yet more, and then finally Eleven began to crawl again, to crawl further along the tunnel and

out into the the world which lay beyond, hoping and hoping that it would be better there, that it would be *easier* there for her and that it (*it the pain and the bath the bathtub and the pain*) would end.

They did.

Author's Note:

This was a lot harder to write than I thought it would be, actually. It's seriously hard to write a story set in the middle of a rainstorm in a shadowy government institution without ever using words like "rain", "agent", or even "grass", "mud" and "earth" (and how to you describe the Upside Down without ever mentioning these creepy trees?). All those words that El only learns from Mike after escaping can't show up, and logically neither can anything that she probably wouldn't have heard in a life spent completely inside a building in perpetual almost-lock-down. I probably missed some all the same, but ... well, I guess I tried, at least.

Also, long live stream-of-consciousness! (and yes, this means I did really write this in one go without ever really pausing or thinking; in fact, I think the longest hesitation was maybe ten seconds while trying to come up with a way to talk about Will without using either his name or the words "boy", "child", or similar ones. Though I also did a reread afterwards, to get the worst of the spelling errors out of the thing ...)

I actually realized while writing this that Eleven in fact *has* heard the word "friend" before Mike explained it to her (when Brenner says "don't be frightened, they're all friends" about the men around the sensory deprivation tank), so I thought that at some point she must've decided that whatever she thought its meaning was before had to be wrong, or else she wouldn't have asked about it (and thank any gods that there are that she did, imagine her reaction to Mike using that word otherwise ...)

Oh dear, I just noticed that I'm already rambling on and on about what I think El's mind might be like, I probably should cut this short.

So I hope you enjoyed it, since I'm not actually sure if it's even readable, given all the repeated words and stuff (also thanks to Stephen King for coming up with the idea to put thoughts into italics within brackets that break the paragraphs, or else this would be even worse ...).

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